

SECTION II – FORAGE SUITABILITY GROUPS

INTRODUCTION

Forage Suitability Groups are a group of one or more soil map units with similar potentials and limitations for forage production. These map units are uniform enough to:

1. Support the same adapted forage plants under the same management conditions.
2. Require similar conservation treatment and management to produce the forages selected in the quality and quantity desired.
3. Have approximately the same potential productivity.

The MLRA groupings are for forage management and production. The Forage Suitability Group is a three-letter symbol. The first letter is the label of the MLRA group; the second and third letters describe physical properties.

<u>MLRA</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Label</u>
131	Delta	D
133; 134	West	W
122; 123; 128	Middle	M
125; 130	Mountain (Cool)	C

<u>Label</u>	<u>Soil Group Physical Properties Description</u>
_DW	Deep, Well Drained, or Moderately Well Drained
_RS	Rocky and/or Steep with Shallow Properties
_SH	Shallow Soils up to 6E.
_WF	Wet and/or Flooded

The first letter of the Forage Suitability Group Label represents the MLRA. The following are Forage Suitability Groups for each MLRA label:

D

DRS: Land Capability Classes 3S and 4S (Excessively Drained).
DDW: Land Capability Classes 1 and 2W.
3W and wetter from MLRA Delta has been combined with WWF of West.

W

- WRS: Land Capability Classes 7, 8E, and 8S, and Droughty 3S Soils.
WWF: Land Capability Classes 3W, 4S, 4W, 5W, 6W, and 8W.
WDW: Soil Loss Tolerances (T's) of 4 and 5 and all Classes up to 6E with Lexington map units included.
WSH: Soil Loss Tolerances (T's) of less than 4 and all Classes up to 6E other than other groupings already designated.

M

- MDW: Land Capability Classes I, 2E, and 2W that are moderately well drained or better, all Soil Loss Tolerances (T's) are 4 or 5.
Land Capability Classes 3E and 4E with Soil Loss Tolerance (T) of 4 or 5 are included.
MWF: Frequently flooded, somewhat poorly drained or worse, regardless of flood classification.
MSH: Soil Loss Tolerances (T's) of 1, 2, and 3 up to Land Capability Class 6E and all 6E's regardless of Soil Loss Tolerance (T).
MRS: All Land Capability Classes 7 and 8, plus all 4S and greater in S category.

C

- CDW: Land Capability Classes 1, 2E, 2W, 2S, 3E, 3S, 4E, generally T's of 4-5.
CWF: Land Capability Class 3W or wetter. Some in this category have Drainage Classification of E, which are frequently flooded.
CSH: Soil Loss Tolerances (T) of 1 and 2, Land Capability Classes 4E or less, and all 6E's regardless of T.
CRS: Land Capability Classes 5S, 6S, 7 (All), and 8 (All).

SPECIES COMPATIBILITY TO FORAGE SUITABILITY GROUPS (FSG)

SPECIES (P) (A) (SLP) ^{1/}	COOL				DELTA		MIDDLE AND EAST				WEST			
	CDW	CRS	CSH	CWF	DDW	DRS	MDW	MRS	MSH	MWF	WDW	WRS	WSH	WWF
LEGUMES:	2/				2/		2/				2/			
Alfalfa (P) ^{3/}	E	P	F	-	-	P	E	P	F	-	E	P	F	-
Alsike Clover (SLP)	G	-	F	E	-	-	G	-	F	E	-	-	-	F
Annual Lespedeza (A) ^{3/ 5/}	G	G	G	-	G	G	G	G	G	-	G	E	G	-
Birdsfoot Trefoil (SLP) ^{3/}	G	F	G	G	-	-	G	F	G	G	F	P	F	F
Hairy Vetch (A) ^{3/}	E	F	G	F	E	F	E	F	G	F	E	F	G	F
Ladino Clover (P) ^{3/}	E	F	G	G	G	P	E	F	E	G	E	F	G	G
Red Clover (SLP) ^{3/}	E	P	G	P	-	-	E	P	G	P	E	-	G	-
Sericea Lespedeza (P) ^{4/}	E	G	G	-	E	G	E	G	G	-	E	G	G	-
COOL SEASON GRASSES:														
Annual Ryegrass (A) ^{3/}	E	F	G	G	G	F	E	F	G	G	E	F	G	G
Kentucky Bluegrass (P)	E	-	F	P	F	-	G	-	F	P	F	-	P	-
Orchardgrass (P)	E	F	G	-	G	F	E	F	G	-	G	P	G	-
Redtop (P)	E	E	E	G	G	G	E	E	E	G	G	G	G	G
Reed Canarygrass (P)	F	-	F	E	F	P	F	F	F	E	F	P	F	G
Matua (SLP) ^{8/}	G	-	F	-	-	-	G	-	F	-	G	-	F	-
Tall Fescue (P)	E	E	E	G	E	G	E	G	E	G	E	G	E	G
Timothy (P) ^{3/}	E	F	G	P	G	-	E	P	G	P	F	-	F	-
Winter Small Grains (A) ^{3/ 7/}	G	P	F	-	E	F	E	F	G	-	E	F	G	-
WARM SEASON GRASSES:														
Bermudagrass (P) ^{4/ 6/}	-	-	-	-	E	F	E	F	G	F	E	F	G	F
Big Bluestem (P) ^{3/ 6/}	G	F	G	F	G	F	E	G	G	F	E	G	G	F
Caucasian Bluestem (P) ^{3/ 6/}	G	F	-	-	G	F	E	G	-	-	E	G	-	-
Eastern Gamagrass (P) ^{4/ 6/}	E	-	G	F	E	-	E	-	E	F	E	-	G	F
Indiangrass (P) ^{3/ 6/}	E	G	G	-	E	G	E	G	G	-	E	G	G	-
Little Bluestem (P) ^{3/ 6/}	E	G	G	-	E	G	E	G	G	-	E	G	G	-
Switchgrass (P) ^{4/ 6/}	E	G	G	G	E	G	E	G	E	G	E	G	G	G
Pearl Millet (A) ^{3/}	E	F	G	-	E	F	E	G	G	-	E	G	G	-
Sorghum Sudangrass (A) ^{3/}	E	-	G	F	E	-	E	-	G	F	E	-	G	F

^{1/} (A) = Annual (P) = Perennial (SLP) = Short Lived Perennial

^{2/} Pasture Suitability Groups:

E = EXCELLENT; G = GOOD; F = FAIR; P = POOR; - = GENERALLY NOT SUITED

Species designated E or G can be used without restriction.

Species designated F should compose no more than 25 percent of a mixture.

Species with P compatibility should not exceed 10 percent of the mixture.

Species having the - designation are generally not suited for that site.

^{3/} These species provide poor erosion control; therefore, where erosion is a potential problem, use a mixture that will provide good erosion control.

^{4/} Once established, provides good erosion control; however, special measures should be taken to prevent erosion during the establishment time of up to five years (e.g., in an existing grass field, establish alternating strips across the slope).

^{5/} Annual lespedeza, Kobe lespedeza straita more southern adapted and has narrower leaflets than Korean lespedeza that is more northern adapted and has broad leaflets.

^{6/} These species are slow to establish. Special attention should be paid to seeding technique and weed control.

^{7/} Order of winter hardiness is Rye, Wheat, Barley, and Oats. Only rye or wheat are adapted to FSG: CDW, CRS, and CSH.

^{8/} Matua requires rotational grazing and a minimum of 50 days recovery. Matua should be grazed or cut to a 3" height several times in the fall.